HIT THE BAR!

50 YEARS STILL GOING STRONG

CARLISLE UNITED SUPPORTERS' CLUB LONDON BRANCH

September 2024



Our recommended strategy for the coming weeks

£1

FIXTURES 24/25

AUGUST

17 Barrow H

24 Milton Keynes Dons A

31 Tranmere Rovers H

SEPTEMBER

7 Bradford City A

14 Fleetwood Town H

21 Swindon Town A

28 Grimsby Town H

OCTOBER

1 Notts County H

5 Colchester United A

12 A.F.C. Wimbledon A

19 Harrogate Town H

22 Walsall A

26 Cheltenham Town H

NOVEMBER

9 Salford City A

6 Bromley A

23 Doncaster Rovers H

DECEMBER

3 Crewe Alexandra H

7 Newport County A

14 Chesterfield H

21 Port Vale A

26 Morecambe H

29 Accrington Stanley H

JANUARY

1 Crewe Alexandra A

4 Tranmere Rovers A

11 Milton Keynes Dons H

18 Bradford City H

25 Fleetwood Town A

28 Notts County A

FEBRUARY

1 Swindon Town H

8 Grimsby Town A

15 Colchester United H

22 Gillingham H

MARCH

1 Barrow A

4 Walsall H

8 Harrogate Town A

15 A.F.C. Wimbledon H

22 Bromley H

29 Doncaster Rovers A

APRIL

1 Chesterfield A

5 Newport County H

12 Morecambe A

18 Port Vale H

21 Accrington Stanley A

26 Cheltenham Town A

MAY

3 Salford City H

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EDITORS BLEAT



Welcome to HTB! 334.

The worrying signs of shortcomings in the team which started to appear in pre-season were carried into the match at Gillingham.

I must confess that I missed the game, so plan to atone for that by joining branch members in London on Saturday to watch the Barrow match on TV.

The faltering start is a real downer when set alongside the massive progress in making Brunton Park a modern stadium which should attract players and fans alike. Having been in the old dressing rooms, the contrast with the new facilities really emphasises how far behind the times the entire set up at Brunton Park had become. It's pretty salutary to think that with £4m plus spent, we are just about up to acceptable standards. If you want a reality check, go to MK Dons and see what a modern accessible stadium looks like—you can justifiably criticise the football club, but Stadium MK is impressive. The Red Lion at Fenny Stratford is pretty good too—hope to see you there.

Here's a photo of Brunton Park in 1925, so there's been some progress since then!



NOTES FROM THE CHAIR



I am ridiculously optimistic every August – certain that this will be our season and then hugely disappointed if we perform poorly in the first few games and even more so if our position at the end of October is at the lower end of the table.

This season though there are some very solid reasons for positivity – it's the first full season for our excellent new owners, the Piatak family; Brunton Park has had major investment for the first time in 30 years; we have plans in place to build high quality training facilities at the Sheepmount; the summer transfer window wasn't hamstrung by lack of funds which meant we could bring in real quality such as Cameron Harper, Aaron Hayden and Charlie Wyke; fans are getting behind the club in ever increasing numbers with season tickets selling well and over 6000 home and away shirts sold. What's not to like?

Some fans were disappointed by poor performances in the friendlies against Rochdale and Gateshead, but there were no complaints today when we beat Stockport and could have had more than the 2-1 win. Bournemouth season-long loanee, Dan Adu-Ajei, impressed and opened the scoring. Other good news this week was Jon Mellish signing a new contract until 2027 – this guy has had offers from higher clubs, but his heart is with Carlisle and he is already a Carlisle legend. For me the only thing I would like to see is a midfielder with creativity and hopefully the return of Callum Guy, fully fit. I have put my tenner on Carlisle to go up as champions at 14 to 1.

This is a huge season for the London Branch in our 50th year. We will be having a **grand 50th anniversary party on Saturday October 12th** after the Wimbledon game and hope that as many members as possible will attend. Read

vHTB over the coming weeks for details but if you want to guarantee your places now email Terry McCarthy: tickets@cusclb.com

Why not join us for the **London Branch trip to Carlisle on 14th September** for the Fleetwood game. There will be a visit to Tullie House in the morning for the excellent exhibition "Backing the Blues – 120 years of Carlisle United", lunch and hospitality in the 7475 lounge and tickets for the game followed by the man of the match award afterwards. The cost is £40 with a £10 deduction for season ticket holders plus the entry fee to Tullie House. Email Terry McCarthy to book your places tickets@cusclb.com.

The advent of Sky Sports sponsorship of the EFL means that many games will be on SkySports+ and others will be selected as featured games. The first featured game is our home game against Barrow on Saturday August 17th kicking off at 12.30pm. For those southern based fans who can't make it to Brunton Park, we have booked tables at the Civil Service Club, 13-15 Great Scotland Yard, London SW1A 2HJ **to watch together** from 11.00am. To book a seat email Dave Brown chairman@cusclb.com but for those who can't commit in advance come along anyway and take your chances with standing space.

Do you have young children or grandchildren between the ages of 5 and 13? Then why not give them a **"Memory for Life" as a mascot** at an away game. When a child has walked out on the pitch with their heroes to the cheers of the fans and then had their picture taken with the captains and officials in the centre circle, they will be a Carlisle fan for life. This season the London Branch is organising mascots for all away games. Book your "Memory for Life" with our new Mascots Organiser, Ruth Vamadevan, mascots@cusclb.com. Be quick, the home mascots sold in 1 hour and 5-6 away games have already been booked.

OTHER BENEFITS THAT YOU SHOULD LOOK TO USE THIS SEASON ARE:

Tickets for games especially the big ones.

Terry McCarthy: tickets@cusclb.com.

Love playing football? Why not play for the London Branch team – Jimmy Glass has – several times.

Chris Tembey: football@cusclb.com

Social events in London – shows, quizzes, comedy.

Paul Irving: social@cusclb.com

Travelling to games with other fans from London or Bristol, often with

group discounts.

London chairman@cusclb.com

Kris Foster Bristol swgroup@cusclb.com

10% Discount in the Blues Store – show your membership card (available on https://membermojo.co.uk/cusclb/yourmembership/cards) in the store.

Online email Dave Brown for your discount code chairman@cusclb.com

Use of the branch season tickets at Brunton Park – You are entitled to discounted use of the branch season tickets for the Paddock for £10 instead of £20 in advance or £24 on the day – it *may* be possible to upgrade to seats. Contact Linda McLoughlin seasontickets@cusclb.com

Fundraising – now that the club is in safe hands, the London Branch has been able to re-focus our support on our original aims of youth participation and support including the CUFC Academy and the CUFC Community Sports Trust, fans experience and the Ladies team. We have delivered over £100,000 of support over the last 10 years and will continue to grow that. Our latest initiative is a t-shirt commemorating our season 50 years ago in the top tier of English football. £2.50 from every shirt will be going to the club's chosen charity for this season the community sports trust. They are doing great things: https://www.facebook.com/cufccst/?locale=en_GB.

You can buy the shirt in the Blues Store https://bluesstore.co.uk/leisurewear

My role as Chair would be impossible, (and the London Branch would be able to deliver a lot less) without the huge support that I get from a large, dedicated team of very committed and talented individuals.

I want to thank Jason Casey (Jugsy to many) – who has stepped down after more than 10 years as Mascot Organiser and given so many kids a "Memory for Life" but no doubt will still be a regular contributor to HTB including his brilliant cartoons.

I want to thank Ken Hullock who stepped down from the role of Information Officer having made a superb job of introducing a new website and delivering all our communications. Ken immediately took on the newly created role of Administration Officer handling all things governance and secretarial and keeping us all in line with committee meetings and agms.

I want to thank Howard Atkinson who has stepped down from the role of season ticket administrator after many years of carrying out that task (he stood

down last year from the committee). Howard, as with Mike Carruthers, continue to run the excellent LB summer trip – this year with 44 of us at Vienna.

I want to welcome Ruth Vamadevan who has taken over as Mascots Coordinator. Her son, Marley, had such a great time as a mascot that Ruth volunteered.

I want to welcome Andy Hall, formerly Carlisle United's Media Officer, as Information Officer. When Andy left Carlisle, I took a chance and asked him to step into the role and was delighted when he accepted. His experience and skills are already having an effect.

I want to welcome Linda McLoughlin as Season Tickets Coordinator. Linda will ensure that members get to use the significant benefit fairly and without favour.

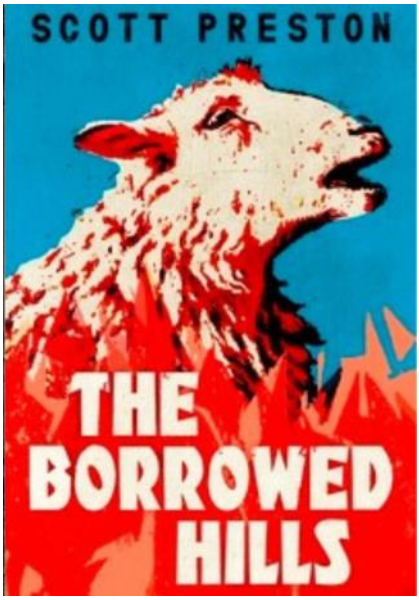
Finally, thank you all for being members. I am proud of this group of ours that sets high expectations and then delivers above them. I am also keenly aware that our membership is in the UK, Europe, Asia, Australasia, the Americas and growing and will look hard to ensure that every member, everywhere gets value from their membership.

Here's to a great season – full of fun and success.

Up the Blues

Literary Corner

With Melvyn Bragg and Hunter Davies as branch members, it's about time we looked at books with a Cumbrian theme.



Joshua Matthews got in touch to recommend The Borrowed Hills.

"It's written by a Cumbrian (Westmalian) author Scott Preston from Windemere. Carlisle United are mentioned a few times in passing in the book. The book's a sort of new age western largely set in Cumbria and is absolutely unreal. A brilliant read start to finish that a lot of our fans would see some reality in. "

KEEP THE FAITH



How are we going to fare this season? There's no doubt that the playing budget is up there amongst the top budgets in the division. When Tom Piatak was asked about it in April by Jon Colman he said, "football operations will have the highest budget by far that they've ever had." He went on to say "the football operation will have all the financial resources to ensure success next year, and success is top 6."

Clearly the money has been made available and so far we have made some eye catching signings. A whole new back four has been recruited and, arguably the marquee signing, Charlie Wyke, has been added up front. The only midfield addition is Ethan Robson who, unfortunately, is likely to be out for 3 months.

Incidentally, it's interesting to look at the different views on the recruitment of former players, given that two of this summer's recruits have played for us before. There's always several on social media who think that there's some sort of obsession with Carlisle fans wanting former players back if they become available, and invariably they are opposed to it.

My view is that if they have done well for us before then there's a good chance they'll be able to perform for us again. It's not always easy to attract players to Carlisle and if there are former players out there who are good, and amenable to coming back, then so much the better. Welcome back Aaron Hayden and Charlie Wyke.

In fact Wyke has a good chance, given that he has 39 goals for us already, to become the first Carlisle player to score 50 goals for the club since Ian Stevens, who last played for us in 2002.

It's in midfield where I thought a lot of our failings stemmed from in the second half of last season. Frankly, the replacements for Callum Guy and Owen Moxon weren't up to it and the level of creativity from those we were left with was sadly lacking. That area of the team needs strengthening. Callum Guy and Ethan Robson won't be available until October probably and, even then, it will be a while until they're up to speed.

I was hoping that the promised youth player on loan from the Premier League would turn out to be a ball-playing midfielder with a bit of pace, and while Bournemouth striker **Dan Adu-Adjei** looks promising, a pacy midfielder on top of that would set us up nicely for a crack at promotion again.

In the meantime the pre-season friendlies haven't being going as well as we would have hoped. I haven't seen any of them so can't comment directly about how we are shaping up, but there has been a lot of reporting and comments about how we have been playing. It sounded like a decent performance in the 2-2 draw with St Mirren but the last 2 defeats, against Rochdale and then Gateshead, albeit with a second string team against the latter, haven't raised expectations about how we might perform in the coming campaign. Of course the results in friendlies are not important; it's more about how the team gel together and perform. On that score it isn't too promising either.

According to Jon Colman, reporting on the Rochdale game, it was "uninspiring stuff" from Carlisle. To hear about Rochdale's "superior passing football" reminded me of last season and Carlisle's inability to get a grip of the game in the vast majority of matches, particularly in the second half of the season.

It's that time of year when everyone is making predictions and the odds for all the teams, especially your own, are being checked. The bookies have us about 5th in the table at the end of the season and some predictions I've seen have us in the play-offs. I am not going to make any predictions until I know what our squad is like at the start of the season; it's not that I would get close anyway. I said last season that we would finish mid-table! With another couple of signings of good creative players, we should be able to pick ourselves up from last season and make a challenge at the top end of the table.

Ken Hullock

VIENNA: SUMMER TRIP 2024



After several years of disruption, the summer trip in 2024 got back to near normal with 44 of us visiting Vienna over the weekend of 14th to 17th of June.

Well nearly normal, as Howard pointed out we had called out an ambulance for one of our travellers for the very first time (luckily dehydration rather than the more worrying things we thought it may be and Croxy proved a lovely carer) and a mass outbreak of covid on our return with WhatsApp pinging "how do you feel – I have just tested positive".

Despite that we had a great time – Vienna is beautiful, far less expensive than



The Bermuda Brau

expected and most of us headed to the Third Man's big wheel the first day and loved not only that but the whole amusement park which is a mix of wide boulevards, old fashioned rides and totally frightening modern additions.

Liz and crowd got thoroughly involved with Vienna's café culture while Suzanne and her friends met her old school friend in his bar "The Tube Station".

The meal at the Bermuda Brau was excellent and Elizabeth – the manager and her team looked after us superbly with good food, service and wine flowing. The walk the following day started with a team pic in front of a Euros fanzone screen and took us through the history of Vienna from the Opera House and every part of the historical central. It didn't go as far as the Schoenbrunn Palace but some of our members did and gave us the best **"Last of the summer wine"** pic that I have ever seen.

On the Sunday some of us headed off to Bratislava (as did others before and after for day trips although both Liz and her crowd and Maggie and I failed to visit the cathedral – Liz because a former president was being commemorated – Maggie and I because oodles of new priests were being signed up on the day).

Only an hour away by a high-speed catamaran down the Danube, Bratislava as Simon said was smaller, hilly and lovely. On our first evening, we watched the England game in a local pub. Maggie had her pic taken with Thormund from Game of Thrones who was sitting next to us. Meanwhile Mike Carruthers had organised a pub for 25 or so members to watch the England game in Vienna. All were highly delighted with the result – except for Thormund.





By the Wednesday most of us were home, with or without covid, having thoroughly enjoyed another summer trip – where to next year?



A personal view from Jonathan McLoughlin

A fantastic Vienna Summer Trip - the day trip to Bratislava was just a very good day. Linda, Lindsay, Garry and me on the Jet-Foil with Simon, Terry, Johannes and Fiona on board too. Lovely day



to walk around and explore the beautiful old town - the old buildings, churches, bars and restaurants and the street markets were amazing, and we were blessed with good weather. The well-established Friday night meal was another great affair - smashing venue with top level service from the staff, the Champions Bar and England match - what a memory that will be - where were you watching the Euro's?

Thank you London Branch, another super Summer Trip with a great turn out.

THE NEW SIGNINGS

Another season now back in the league which we've spent the majority of the last 10 years in and despite last year's troubles, there does seem to be a fair amount of hope for the forthcoming season.

We can't dwell too much on the disappointment and a new season does represent a fresh start so let's keep our fingers crossed that the on-pitch performances can match all of the current positivity off of the pitch. The changes at Brunton Park during the off-season have been well documented and it is great to see the Piatak family putting plenty of money into the club. Have a look at the video of the new changing rooms if you haven't yet, makes us look like a top flight side!

In order to address those said on-pitch problems, the owners, management team and fans alike all knew that the summer transfer window would be vitally important and it was obviously going to be a rather busy couple of months. **At the time of writing we've made seven transfers, although it is expected that at least one loan player from a Premier League side will also still be joining.** At the minute at least, that player is a complete unknown) but whoever it is (Dan Adu-Adjei pictured below, is that player) will hopefully have a bit more of an impact than Luke Plange and Terry Ablade…..



Working up the pitch, we've made signings in more or less all key areas. Starting with 21-year-old goalkeeper **Jude Smith** who joins from Newcastle's under-21 side he's potentially, and this is no disrespect to Jude, but the least exciting of the seven signings. That's purely down to the fact that he could well be the third choice goalkeeper this term, with both Harry Lewis and Gabe Breeze above him in the pecking order. We all know that Gabe could well be our long-term number one further down the line but it wouldn't be too much of a surprise

to see him get some more senior minutes out on loan.

One of Breeze or Smith will likely have a spell away at some point and both have long-term contracts so it would make sense for one to get some more senior experience, that's a decision which Simmo must make however.

Moving to defence, I'd arguably say this is where we've done the best business so far. There's no hiding it, as a collective the entire team underperformed last season but at least to me, it was the defence which was our Achilles' heel. As a result, it has undergone a significant overhaul this summer and there's a clear argument for it being stronger than the one in which we had in League One.

Left-back Cameron Harper joins from Inverness and with Jack Armer departing its a like-for-like replacement. However of the two, Harper is the one who has more attacking upside, the Scot supplied three goals and 11 assists last season in the Scottish Championship, including the play-offs, compare that to Armer's one goal and two assists and there's plenty to be excited about.

Armer was a great servant for the club and despite his form dipping a bit last year, was consistent defensively. Harper strikes me as a player who could be key if we do go to a five-back, which seems likely and it wouldn't come as a surprise to see him replicate those numbers now in England.

On the other side of the defence we've also made a signing, that being **Archie Davies from Dundalk.** Although maybe not quite as exciting as the signing of Harper on paper, Davies could well be the starter next season. We've lost Fin Back and Josh Emmanuel in that position and despite neither being a mainstay in the defence, another right-back was very much needed this window. Much of that is down to Jack Ellis' injury record, with the 20-year-old's progression being somewhat hindered by it. It wouldn't surprise me to see a blend of the two in that position, both to manage the workload on them but also just to bring something a touch different. Both players will be solid options when fit.

Moving on, it wouldn't be a proper transfer window for the Blues if a former player wasn't re-signed would it?

Thankfully the trend continues, with **Aaron Hayden** being welcomed back to Brunton Park. Obviously there's a bit of bias her, but on his day, I believe that Hayden is one of the best defenders in the league and at 27 should be or at least coming into his prime. However,

we have to keep him fit and that is an incredibly tough task. Over the last two seasons for Wrexham, he's made just 41 league appearances and that is purely down to injury. He played just three times for the Red Dragons in 2024 which is a slight worry, fortunately though, we have added more cover in that position.

That comes in the form of **Terrel Thomas,** a player who is dropping down a division despite being a mainstay in Charlton's defence last season. Sure, the Addicks' defence was by no means one of the strongest in the third tier last term but its worth noting that of the 31 starts that the Saint Lucian international made, 14 of those came during their 14-match unbeaten run towards the back end of the season, all under Nathan Jones. If pre-season is anything to go off then he could possess a bit of a goal threat from set-pieces despite scoring just once in the last four seasons, great contradiction from myself there.

Nonetheless, and here's my slightly hot take for the season, if Hayden and Thomas stay fit and are the starting pair, or two of the three central defenders, then between them they'll score 10



in the league. Without dreaming too much about goalscoring defenders, we also need players further up the pitch who can score goals, something which we severely lacked last season…

Although maybe not a goalscorer, **Ethan Robson** could provide plenty of opportunities for others to find the net from central midfield. He joins after an alright season for MK Dons and adds further depth to the midfield ranks. However, and this is once again at the time of writing, he did suffer a potentially significant injury in a pre-season match against Rochdale, hopefully when this is published, we'll have positive news about that but I wouldn't exactly say I'm optimistic about the chances of that coming. (*And you were sadly correct Ivan, Ed.)*

Last but not least, and potentially the one who the majority of the fanbase is excited about? **Charlie Wyke**. Yes he's perhaps not quite the force of old but he's not played in the division since the first half of the 2016/17 season. That was of course with us before joining Bradford in January, however prior to departing for the 2023 play-off semi-final losers, Charlie scored 14 times in just 26 matches.

I always like to take a bit of a pessimistic approach when it comes to Carlisle, no shock given the amount of disappointment over the last 10 or so years but the signing of Wyke made me think that we're now genuine promotion contenders.

I'm sure that'll age superbly and will probably print this out for future reference, but to me, we look to be a side who are chasing an immediate promotion back to League One.



Simmo hears of Ivan's predictions

In my pre-season predictions, full predictions are available on The Real EFL YouTube channel as a quick plug there, but I've got us in fifth. As mentioned that's somewhat down to not wanting to give into the hope and the positivity with some others probably having us in the automatics but I'm expecting a decent showing now. Anything can happen if we make the play-offs, just look back to 2023…

Ivan Newsome

LONDON BRANCH RETAIN CHAOS PLATE



Back row: **Mike Kilner, Joseph Scott, Tom Edmondson, James Griffiths (GK)**
Front row: **Lucas Tembey, Chris Tembey, Dave Scott**.

On the first day of June 2024, as thousands headed to Wembley for the Champions League Final, a magnificent seven headed to Walthamstow's Douglas Eyre Sports Centre hopeful of having their own successful football outing. At the very least, defending the Plate won 12 months ago was high on the agenda. Could the 2024 version achieve even better?

The core of that 2023 winning team remained intact; James in goal, Dave, Joseph, Chris & Lucas - joined this time by Mike Kilner & Tom Edmondson, with Rosie our vocal support from the sidelines for the day.

The weather wasn't great, grey & very 'un-June' although possibly better than last year's muggy heat. The LB FC were one of 16 teams making up this annual 6-a-side Tournament, superbly run by our friends from the Leyton Orientear.

The LB found themselves in a group with Leyton Orient, who we'd beaten in the 11-a-side version back in February. Dulwich Hamlet who beat us 0-1 in the group last year & Coppermill Swifts, who were the local Walthamstow Vets team we played on the morning of our match with Charlton in March.



Cup Game One: Lost 0-1 v Orientear FC - Having dominated possession for much of the game it was "George" the outstanding Orient player, who weaved his way through to slot home what turned out to be the winner. Tembey Snr had the best chance for the LB but fired just over from Tembey Jnr's square ball.



Cup Game Two: Won 2-1 v Dulwich - For this see England v Slovakia! Talk about getting out of jail. Trailing 0-1 with a couple of minutes remaining, Lucas went on a mesmerising run, beating a couple of players before laying the ball back to Dave Scott, whose fine ball to the far post found Chris who slotted home the equaliser with a first-time finish. That might have been enough for some but the LB smelled blood. Dulwich attacked & Tembey Snr won the ball on the halfway line, he drove forward & laid the ball off to the right to son Lucas, who finished superbly under the keeper with the last kick of the game and thus netting a dramatic winner.



Cup Game Three: Lost 1-2 v Coppermill Swifts - Mike Kilner's fantastic through-

ball sent Tembey Snr through & his first-time left foot finish beat the keeper low at his right-hand post. All was looking good for the win that would mean a top-two finish and qualification to the Cup Competition. **However, 2 goals from distance produced the turn around & defeat meant a third-place finish and the Plate competition for us once again.**

Plate Quarter Final: Won 5-0 v RainbOs (Orient LGBTQ+ team) - This was basically the "feed Lucas" game; Lucas 5-0 Orient! Should & could have been more with better decisions & finishing but in the end, it was a cruise, Lucas unstoppable & unplayable in this fine individual showing.

Tom continued to spend his 'resting-time' plugging the energy gel's he'd brought along and Dave joined the French lads from PSG (who would go on to make the Cup Final) in a pre-Semi-Final warm-up, which quickly turned into a chat about who - and where on earth – was this "Carlisle United"!

Plate Semi-Final: Won 2-0 v Newcastle - This was tight but a perfect Semi-Final display. Joseph really turned on the style & great work from him and Chris set Lucas free one-on-one & the LB had that crucial first goal. The game was managed superbly with Dave, Tom & Mike absolute rocks and James solid between the sticks. Time was well managed & one final break left Joseph with time to put a couple of Newcastle lads on their backside & having rounded the 'keeper in the process, fire the LB well and truly into the Final. A second consecutive Plate Final at that!

Plate Final: Won 6-1 v Neillians (local team and Plate regulars) - Joseph's game, no doubt. He fired the LB into the lead with a brilliant strike from distance. An equally fine strike from distance restored parity but then Joseph turned up the heat with a hat-trick to put the LB in full control. Lucas chipped in with 2 & Chris got lucky with a pen that was partially saved but the spin took it into the opposite corner.



Last year it took penalties, this year it was more convincing. Fantastic victory & Plate retained = job done!!

Joseph was named our player of the Tournament and Lucas, with 9 goals, comfortably finished our leading goal scorer.

A Day to Remember

How to be our Mascot at away games

From a sneak peek behind the scenes to meeting their heroes and taking a place in the centre circle ahead of kick off with the match officials and captains, an afternoon for your youngster as United's official mascot is one that will never be forgotten. The London Branch now sponsor away mascots with Carlisle United offering a free mascot place to visiting teams on a reciprocal basis.



Mascots must be London Branch members aged 5-13 and be accompanied to the match by an adult and can only partake once per season. A goody bag will be funded by the London Branch.



Parent and mascot will buy their own tickets for the game. The mascot will be collected at a designated point for a walk out of tunnel with players and pre-kick off photograph opportunity.

Contact Branch Mascot Organiser, Ruth Vamadevan at: mascots@cuscblb.com to find out more, and to book.

Brunton Park Diary 2024/25

THE SUMMERTIME BLUES

May 9th (Thu)

Potential United gaffer in waiting **Murph** departs Annan Athletic after 7 years at the helm, to take up the same vacancy at neighbours Queen of the South. One of their Directors Jim McLinden, head of North Lakes Energy and a sponsor of United's academy and youth set-up, is already trying to forge a closer relationship between the two clubs. One idea is to reinstate a regular pre-season friendly as part of a 'Borders Cup' while another is at player-related matters following last season's loan of Max Kilsby.

May 13th (Mon)

The ex-Blues on the move begin with the newly promoted Spireshites landing **Paddy Madden** on a two-year deal after quitting Stockport County. The veteran striker will be able to have a craic with how much better the music charts and telly was back in the 1990s with fellow old boy Mike Jones.

May 20th (Mon)

The eagerly anticipated return of central defender **Aaron Hayden** is confirmed following his release from Hollywood FC, where injuries limited him to 88 games across three campaigns, two of which of course ending in promotion. He returns on a two-year deal, so fingers and toes crossed.

May 21st (Tue)

Recently released **Kai Nugent** signs for the Jameaters, which still holds good memories after helping them to promotion during the 2022/23 season and then being named United's academy player of the season.

May 23rd (Thu)

The football may have been largely rubbish but at least the family experience was up there with the best as United pick up an EFL Family Excellence Silver Award for last season. The Family Zone and Fan Zone stood out for the assessors.

Former stopper **Michael Kelly** agrees a two-year deal with rivals Accrington Stanley following the Irishman's departure from MK Dons.

May 24th (Fri)

Uber-brief Blues loanee **Reece James** signs for Rotherham United.

May 25th (Sat)

Ryan Edmondson's happy holiday down under continues with a brace to help Central Coast Mariners seal a 3-1 win in the A-League Grand Final.

May 27th (Mon)

Plenty of old boys trotting in pastures new. Promotion rivals Donny Rovers decide to take a punt on ex-Blue **Jordan Gibson**, signing the hot and cold midfielder on a two-year deal with a further year option.

Now 29, early 2010s youngster **Josh Todd** returns for a second spell at Annan after leaving Queen of the South while pensioner-in-waiting **Gary Liddle** accepts a role of Player Assistant Manager with Northern Premier League Premier Division Whitby, famous for Captain Cook and Dracula……and nearly as old. Town's ranks also include Nathan Thomas and Connor Simpson.

May 30th (Thu)

Season ticket sales go past 2,000. The final totals from the previous two seasons for comparison are 3,050 (2023/4) and 2,197 for (2022/3).

With a promise to search further than Bradford, Rotherham and other parts of Yorkshire, **Kenny Brown** is appointed Head of Academy Recruitment following a nine-year stint as Academy Scout for the Barcodes. UEFA B qualified Brown has previous coaching smarts earned at Gretna FC 2008, Annan Athletic, Workington Reds and Northbank FC and worked in United's academy as a coach in 2002.

May 31st (Fri)

Left-sided ex-Blue **Brennan Dickenson** joins Murph at QoS on a two-year deal, with an option while Torquay United bring in **Mike Edwards** as their new assistant manager.

Jun 3rd (Mon)

Jarrod "Back in the North-East" (WTF) Branthwaite wins his first England cap, coming on for the final half hour in the 3-0 win over the recent Ladies Singles Tennis champion at the Paris Open, Bosnia Herzegovina.

Jun 4th (Tue)

The day after leaving the Blues by mutual consent, **Jayden Harris** returns to his fifth-tier home as he signs for Sutton United.

Jun 5th (Wed)

Measuring 0.5 on the Richter scale of

shock news, AFC Fylde's latest version of Beech-ball will have **Joe Riley** to call on as he joins on a one-year deal with an option of a second year.

Former keeper coach **Steve Collis** leaves Oldham Athletic to take on the role at Notts County.

Nigel Clibbens' whopper will be hanging proudly in the Fan Zone with confirmation that his big screen will arrive in time for the Euro 2024 big kickaround. One player not there will be **Branthwaite**, who misses out on the final 26-man squad.

Jun 7th (Fri)

Armathwaite-based mineral water peddlers Aqua Pura are rumoured to be the new main shirt sponsor for next season on the day the club formally thanks and confirms the end of Bimson's two-year stint. The club close in on selling 3,000 season tickets for next season.

Tullie House's ***Backing The Blues - 120 Years of Carlisle United*** memorabilia jamboree is announced and will open its doors on 20 July. Unlike various first teamers, it is expected to continue without any form of knack until 10 November.

Various Deep Fried Pizza press sources say Caley Thistle attacking left-back **Cameron Harper** is set to jump the wall and join United. The 22-year-old was one of Thistle's standout performers in an otherwise disappointing season and has gained international recognition with the Scotland under-21 team. Despite his young years, he can boast over 150 appearances and a dozen goals.

Jun 8th (Sat)

The rumour mill links the Cumbrians with out-of-contract Gateshead defender **Kenton Richardson**, a centre half who can also fill in at full back, and Cobblers FC full-back **Aaron McGowan**.

Jun 10th (Mon)

With news of his passing, tributes are paid to former midfielder **Willie Carlin**, who represented United between 1964 and 1967 making 93 appearances and scoring 21 goals. Carlin went on to play under Clough at Derby County and put his boots on for Liverpool, Sheffield United, Leicester City and Cardiff City in a distinguished career.

Presumably just for sh*ts and giggles, Salford City sign former striker **Cole Stockton** on a two-year deal following his release from Burton Albion.

Jun 11th (Tue)

The Blues bring their keeper contingent back up to three with a two-year-deal

for 21-year-old Scottish goalkeeper **Jude Smith**, who leaves the Barcodes. Smith came through the ranks at Celtic before moving to East Fife as a teenager and has represented Scotland Under -21s.

Jun 12th (Wed)

Surely taking the word "delighted" to whole new levels, National League South side Hornchurch FC report they are delighted to announce the signing of former midfielder **Angelo Balanta**.

Jun 13th (Thu)

Attacking project **Anton Dudik** takes up his one-year contract offer. The plan is for the youngster to gain regular first-team senior football on loan somewhere down the pyramid.

National League North side Scunny catch **The Fish** following the former striker's departure from Fleetwood Town while the recently freed **Corey Whelan** reunites with Beech at AFC Fylde on a two-year deal with an option of a third year.

Jun 14th (Fri)

One week on and the rumoured capture of **Cameron Harper** from Inverness CT becomes reality as he gets over the line on a three-year deal.

One player not returning will be **Jack Diamond**, which is not too surprising with newly promoted Stockport County waving a three-year deal in his direction. With the capacity to have torn up League Two if he had returned, it does feel very much like our loss and their gain.

Jun 17th (Mon)

The defensive rebuild continues with 28-year-old big unit (or mini-Stephane) **Terell Thomas** on a two-year deal. The 6ft 3ins 12-cap Saint Lucian joins United following his slightly surprising departure from Charlton Athletic where he made 40 appearances last season with rival clubs also showing some leg in his direction. Thomas began his youth career with the Gooners and the Addicks before joining Wigan Athletic back in 2017. He then had a three-year stint at AFC Wimbledon via a loan to Sutton United followed by spells at Crewe Alexandra and Reading in the Championship. Seen as a leader on the pitch, Thomas finished third in the CAFC's Player of the Season award, voted for by supporters.

United are linked with an offer for 29-year-old **Jordan Jones** following the Northern Ireland winger's decision to turn down his contract offer from Wigan Athletic.

Jun 19th (Wed)

The Cumbrians sail past over 3,000 season ticket sales ahead of the 2024/25 campaign as they announce the appointment of **Glen Johnson** as new first-team goalkeeper coach, **Sophie Birnie** with the hardest job in football as our first-team physiotherapist, and confirm **Billy Barr** extending his deal for the current season.

Jun 20th (Thu)

21-year-old ex-loanee **Ethan Walker** signs a two-year deal with Scottish Championship side Ayr United following the expiration of his contract at Blackburn Rovers.

Former Academy product **Josh Galloway** joins Jameaters FC. The 22-year-old arrives via Annan Athletic and FC United and will be hoping to kick-on after a frustrating few years in the football wilderness, otherwise known as the Premier League Academy and Under-23 set-up.

Jun 24th (Mon)

League One side Wigan Athletic and fellow League Two outfit Morecambe will be United's opponents in Group C of the Mickey Mouse BSM Trophy. There will also be an invited Under-21 side who nobody really cares about, after all, whatever happened to Kobbie Boateng Mainoo and Alejandro Garnacho after making debut appearances against the Blues in the competition?

One familiar face in the opposition dug out will be former club legend **Danny Grainger**, as he takes up a challenge down the road at Morecambe as Assistant Manager. One of the 37-year-olds first jobs will be to help the returning Derek Adams find about 20 players.

Manasse Mampala ticks off another National League North side with a move to Farsley Celtic while feet-of-concrete **Rod McDonald** moves to Notts County from Harrogate Town for (rub eyes in disbelief) an undisclosed fee. Another ex-Blue, **Adam Campbell**, decides to leave Crawley Town and join Hartlepool United back in his native northeast.

Jun 25th (Tue)

Cumbria's worst kept secret, the location of the club's new training ground, is finally out of the bag with confirmation that the project will be the less flood-prone upper plateau at the Sheepmount. The first main training pitch should be completed before the winter in an initial £4m development funded by Team USA.

If Scarborough haven't suffered enough

already, they pick up former forward **Richie Bennett** in a raffle following his departure from Scunny while former flying full-back **Richard Keogh** returns to the Tangerines in the role of Assistant Coach.

Jun 26th (Wed)

Signing number five is 27-year-old former Sunderland midfielder **Ethan Robson** on a two-year deal following his release from MK Dons. Described as a left-footer with a fine pass and a good box-to-box engine, he'll be looking to add more goals to his game - actually any goals will do.

Jun 27th (Thu)

The Potters will be visiting the Field of Dreams as the draw for the first round of the Carabao Cup is made. Connections include Stoke City head cheese Steven Schumacher and former stopper Jack Bonham. The tie is due to be played on 13 August.

Jun 28th (Fri)

After a disappointing 23/4 season, another reacquaintance will be Wembley winner **JK Gordon** after he departs Palace to join Colchester United on a two-year deal.

Jun 29th (Sat)

After early summer speculation that a return to the club could be on the cards, that's quashed with **Joel Senior** getting a chance with the Pirates in League One. The temptation of regular wages on a two-year deal was incredibly, more attractive than the will-they-won't-they payment lottery if Joel stuck it out with the Shrimps.

Local ex-Blue **Dan Kirkup** takes the top job at Carlisle City. The experienced former Blue will be looking to build on a good top eight debut season at Northern League Division One level.

Jul 1st (Mon)

You can almost smell and taste the salty tears flowing from the Valley Parade area as **Charlie Wyke** returns for a second spell at United. The 31-year-old goal-bagging cheat code, who hit 39 goals in 89 appearances for the Blues between 2015-17, signs a two-year deal.

John Nixon officially steps down from his role as a director on the 1921 board at Brunton Park.

The Valiants bring in ex-Blue **Ben Amos** to recurringly pick the ball up from the back of their net while midfield old boy **Antony Sweeney** joins the coaching set-up at Gateshead FC.

Jul 2nd (Tue)

Fresh from nibbling vegemite sandwiches for five years with Brisbane Roar, ex-defender **Tom Aldred** takes up an offer to join Indian Super League champions Mohun Bagan Super Giant. "It will be an honour to wear the green and maroon jersey, and I am extremely excited to get started.

Mystery departure **Paul Gerrard** is back in football with the keeper coach role at Peterborough United while ex-striker Jerry 'I love loans me' Yates joins Derby County on a season-long rental from Swansea City.

Dudik twists his ankle in training and will be out for around four weeks with a Grade 2 strain while **Kelly** will be missing for a couple of weeks while he nurses another calf niggle.

Jul 3rd (Wed)

There are deserved tributes to Mr Carlisle United, which will be left to elsewhere on these pages, as news comes through of the passing of **Andrew Jenkins** at the age of 87.

After six years coaching with the Welsh FA, former left-back **Rob Edwards** returns to football (tee-hee) to take on a first-team coaching role with Forest Green Pyramid Tumblers FC.

Jul 5th (Fri)

PENRITH XI (0) 0 CUFC XI (3) 8 – PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY

A comfortable pre-season opener in front of an excellent 1,030 crowd with the fit Armer and McCalmont omitted from the squad and strongly tipped to be heading to the departure gate. Although hard to make a judgement call given the standard of opposition, Butterworth impressed and also hit the post at 0-2. The goal rush was:

0-1: Wyke holds the ball up for Vela to break at the edge of the box and cross for Harper to finish from close range at the far post.

0-2: Butterworth hits a curling free-kick just inside the post after Wyke is fouled just outside the box.

0-3: Hopper finds Butterworth and he drills home from the edge of the box.

0-4: Penalty reliably converted by Charters after O'Donoghue is fouled on the left of the box.

0-5: The lively O'Donoghue picks up the pieces from a half-cleared attack, feeds Armstrong and he calmy rifles it in.

0-6: A deep cross from Neal is headed from about 8 yeads out by Charters back across the keeper.

0-7: The goal of the game with Hetherington capping a weaving run down their left with an excellent finish.

0-8: O'Donoghue runs onto a long clearance and buries it past the advancing keeper.

United (first half): Lewis, Lavelle, Hayden, O'Brien, Harper, Vela, McGeouch, Hopper, Robson, Butterworth, Wyke (Hetherington 32).

(Second half): Breeze, Thomas, Barclay, Mellish, Fitzpatrick, Allan, Neal, Charters, Armstrong, Hetherington, O'Donoghue.

Simmo's glowing reference helps convince Southport gaffer Jim Bentley to take on former loan midfielder **Sonny Hilton**. Still only 23, he moves a couple of steps up to the National League North from NPL D1 NW outfit Bootle.

Jul 8th (Mon)

Highly rated 25-year-old right-sided defender **Archie Davies** becomes United's seventh summer signing on a two-year deal with an undisclosed fee moving in direction of the League of Ireland club Dundalk. The former Palace youth, Brighton & Hove Albion, Crawley Town and Aldershot Town man seems to be one of the camp's first *Moneyball*-style signings with data metrics doing some of the heavy lifting. Keen to be back in Blighty, Davies was halfway through the Irish season and free to talk to other interested clubs in January; United making a fair offer to jump the suitor queue and secure his services early. Davies was named fans' player of the year in his first season with Dundalk in the SSE Airtricity Men's Premier Division, while he was also named in the PFAI Premier Division Team of the Year, amid a 63-game spell for the club.

Long serving wantaway left-back **Jack Armer** departs as expected, to Burton Albion for an undisclosed fee rumoured to be in the £100,000 ballpark. The 23-year-old finished with 172 appearances for United, scoring five goals and cites his new club's fine training facilities as one of the reasons for pushing for the move.

Released youth forward **Romeo Park** has been training with Jameaters FC and played the full game in their latest pre-season outing, a 4-0 win at Coppull United in the George Melling Tournament with Josh Galloway and Kai Nugent noted amongst the scorers.

Jul 9th (Tue)

KENDAL TOWN XI (0) 0 CUFC XI (1) 3 - PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY

There were first appearances for Davies, Smith and Ellis with the Blues making hard work of their Northern League Division One opponents. Thomas buried a Charters corner to separate the teams at the break with the familiar sight of a string of chances being missed by United. It remained 0-1 right up until the





Dan Butterworth springs into action at Kendal



68th minute when Wyke beat the offside trap to chip in following good work by Allan and then Wyke got his second after being played in by Ethan Robson.

United (first half): Smith, Davies, Thomas, Barclay, Mellish, Fitzpatrick, Charters, Neal, Hetherington, Butterworth, Armstrong.

(second half): Breeze, Lavelle, Hayden, Ellis, Harper, McGeouch, Robson, Vela, Allan, O'Donoghue, Wyke.

The missing **McCalmont** is rumoured to be on his way to Central Coast Mariners.

Jul 10th (Wed)

The agent of goal-shy beanpole **Ryan Loft** has only gone and done it again, this time getting his man a three-year deal at Cambridge United following a fee being paid to relegated Port Vale.

Jul 11th (Thu)

Third time's a charm as Annan sign ex-Blue **Max Kilsby** permanently. Will he be back for 2027/28?

Old boy **Lukas Jensen** signs for Millwall from Lincoln City on a long-term contract for an undisclosed fee.

Jul 12th (Fri)

Alfie McCalmont is smuggled out of the country and as expected, lands up at Australian club Central Coast Mariners alongside Ryan Edmondson. Judging by his parting comments, the unsettled midfielder was clearly unhappy with the style of football being played and the amount of times the ball was disappearing over his head.

Now able to finally sign players, free agent **Hallam Hope** is one of 15 players picked up by Morecambe. Good luck with that.

Jul 13th (Sat)

JAMEATERS XI (0) 0 CUFC XI (0) 0 - PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY

The host's solid defensive display, despite featuring a number of trialists, was good enough to thwart the Blues. If former Blue Steven Rigg had finished the easiest chance of the game following Hayden's back pass blooper, the players may have been walking home. Armstrong had a close-range scuff scrambled off the line and Hetherington also went close in a game of few chances.

United: Lewis (Smith 60), Lavelle (Hayden 60), Barclay (Thomas 60), Ellis (Davies 60), Mellish (Allan 60), Harper (Fitzpatrick 24), Robson (Charters 60), McGeouch (Vela 60), Hetherington (O'Donoghue 60), Butterworth (Neal

60), Wyke (Armstrong 46).

Simmo reveals post-match that a loan deal has been agreed for an attacking Premier League youngster, who will join on conclusion of his parent club's overseas tour.

Lasher Delap's highly rated sprog Liam completes a £15m move to top-flight newcomers Ipswich Town from Manchester City.

Jul 15th (Mon)

The Blades use their parachute payment loot to lure ex-Blue **Callum O'Hare** to the steel city on a four-year-contract after turning down fresh terms to stay at Coventry City.

Jul 17th (Wed)

Former defender **James Chester**, who turned out for the Blues a whole 14 seasons ago, will be shifting his creaking knees for Salford City this season after confirming his departure from Barrow AFC.

Chester, 35, had been offered a new deal to remain in south Cumbria but he has opted to head to the Peninsula Stadium ahead of the 2024/25 campaign.

Another ex-centre half loanee of less standing with supporters, **Mitch Roberts**, moves to National League new boys Boston United after a spell with Oxford City.

Jul 18th (Thu)

18-year-old youth team alumni **Romeo Park** opts to sign for Carlisle City for the coming season having played for the Sky Blues as part of a loan from United. As someone nicely said on their socials, give him the no. 4 shirt just so the manager can say "wear four out there, Romeo".

Jul 19th (Fri)

ST MIRREN XI (0) 2 CUFC XI (1) 2 - PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY

The end of a week's hard training was finished off with a decent performance. Vela, Neal and Robson largely controlled the midfield while on and even if they switched off for the first, the back three of Thomas, Lavelle and Hayden appeared to be forming a good understanding between them. Neal had shot the Blues in front after linking well with Wyke before two headers put the hosts in front. Enter the last five minutes and Butterworth's corner was planted into the back of St Mirren's net by Thomas' nut.

United: Lewis, Thomas, Lavelle, Hayden (Barclay 60), Davies (Ellis 60), Charters (Fitzpatrick 60), Neal (McGeouch 60),

Vela (O'Donoghue 60), Robson, Wyke (Butterworth 60), Armstrong.

Jul 20th (Sat)

The club reveals it received a bid for **Big Jon** from Wigan over the summer. Fortunately for the Blues, Simmo gave the Latics a similar riposte to the one delivered by Mells to the Stockport fans when he smashed in his penalty at Wembley.

Josh O'Brien links up on a half-season deal with Carlisle City as part of the closer relationship between the two clubs. Centre-back O'Brien along with Sam Hetherington, Jake Allan and Aran Fitzpatrick are all on third-year scholarship deals at United.

Jokull Andresson and his Weetabix shoulders appear to have found their level, the skittish keeper returning to his native Iand of fire and ice for a loan spell back his with boyhood club Afturelding.

Former centre-back **Dynel Simeu** plays as a trialist for Colchester Utd in their 2-1 pre-season win at Wycombe.

Jul 22nd (Mon)

Beechy is still bringing the band back together at AFC Fylde, free agent **Offy Zanzala** the latest to pose next to his grinning face with a pen in his hand having departed Newport County at the end of last season.

Jul 26th (Fri)

The latest commercial update says that the new shirts are selling like hot cakes over the first three weeks with the cash tills even up on last season's record-breaking total and a full 49 per cent beyond the similar period two years ago. A tidy 3,200 new green, pink and blue away shirts and 2,500 home shirts have been shifted, in addition to 3,150 season tickets for the period to July 15.

Ryan Bowman's lengthy footballing CV adds Cheltenham Town to its pages, the big Cumbrian forward signing a one-year deal having been let go by Shrewsbury Town. Speaking of which, the Salop club's physio department better be ready as they announce the signing of **Josh Kayode** on a season-long loan deal from Rotherham United.

Jul 27th (Sat)

MILNTHORPE CORINTHIANS XI (0) 0 CUFC U-19s XI (1) 3 - PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY

A strong second half performance saw United step up after the hosts struck a post with a forty-yard free kick to ease past their West Lancs Football League Premier near neighbours. There was a

great individual Jonah Lowes goal for the first followed by a 20 yarder from Hopper and then a Hetherington strike from outside the box in a good run out.

ROCHDALE XI (1) 2 CUFC XI (0) 1 - PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY

A below-par performance with the National League side deserving their victory, Dan Butterworth's late solo consolation in off the post being one of the few bright spots. Dale were able to bypass United's pressing game too easily and too often and once in midfield, treated the ball as a friend in contrast to the Blues more long-ball approach. The returning Kelly showed a few nice touches albeit, he needs to read up on the offside law. While both Hayden and Thomas had to depart with knocks, there was worse news with Ethan Robson suffering early hamstring knack that will keep him out for around 10-12 weeks.

United: Lewis (Breeze 67), Thomas, Hayden (Barclay 62), Mellish, Davies (Ellis 61), Harper (Charters 61), Neal (Lavelle 73), Vela (O'Donoghue 67), Robson (McGeouch 30), G Kelly (L Armstrong 46), Wyke (Butterworth 67).

Jul 28th (Sun)

The ongoing renovations mean that the East Stand and Warwick Road End will be closed to home fans for Brunton Park's opening game of the season, the Carabao Cup first round tie against Stoke City.

Jul 30th (Tue)

GATESHEAD XI (0) 2 CUFC XI (0) 0 - PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY SHELLACKING

If Rochdale was concerning, the latest pre-season display was full sh1t-the-bed time for a good proportion of Cumbrian support after Owen Oseni's second-half brace. Out of sorts United were lucky to be all square at the break after a missed penalty for the hosts with Armstrong and Kelly missing half-chances. Even though they remarkably repeated the gift in the second period, it hardly acted as inspiration to the Blues as they continued to chase shadows. A late chance for Wyke frustratingly came back off the right-hand post and that was the result done and dusted.

United: Breeze, Lavelle (Hayden 60), Barclay, Mellish (Thomas 46), Harper (Vela 46), Ellis, McGeouch (Neal 46), Charters (Davies 60), Butterworth (O'Donoghue 60), Kelly (Wyke 60), Armstrong. Not used: Smith, Allan, Hetherington.

The trip to Salford on Saturday, November 9, and the hosting of Accrington on Sunday, December 29 are moved to 1230 kick-offs after being selected for live TV coverage on Sky Sports +.





A poor performance at Gateshead followed hard on the heels of the Rochdale defeat.





Aug 1st (Tue)

The anticipated season-long loan signing of 19-year-old Bournemouth forward **Daniel Adu-Adjei** is confirmed as over the line to make it signing number eight. Adu-Adjei, who was previously with the academies at Brentford and Fulham, featured in 11 games on loan with Leyton Orient last season scoring once. He was named academy player of the year after scoring 25 goals in 25 games for the Cherries development squad, signed a long-term contract with the club in June and featured in last month's friendly against Arsenal in the USA.

Following a lengthy training spell with Northampton Town, the Cobblers sign former United winger **Liam McCarron** from Stoke City for an undisclosed fee.

Another former left-back is also on the move, 31-year-old **Conor Townsend** signing for newly promoted Tractor Boys from WBA for an undisclosed fee.

Aug 2nd (Fri)

Following the unwanted interest from higher up the pyramid, **Super Jonny Mellish** pens an extension to his current deal until the summer of 2027.

A quartet of past forwards pick up new clubs. **Omari Patrick's** successful pre-season trial on Wirral winds up with a new one-year deal with Tranmere Rovers while **Ashley Nadesan** leaves Gillingham on a season-long National League returnees Sutton United. Arguably the standout move is former loan disaster **Elias Sorensen** getting a gig with Championship new boys Pompey for a reputed fee of around £300k. The 24-year-old moves on a three-year deal with an option for a further 12 months after scoring 24 goals in 30 appearances to help Danish side Esbjerg to the third-tier title. Bringing up the rear is lower league journeyman **Mark Beck**, who joins Gateshead from Solihull Moors on a half-season loan move.

Aug 3rd (Sat)

CUFC XI (1) 2 STOCKPORT COUNTY XI (0) 1 - PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY

Finally, a little ray of sunshine through the recent pre-season clouds even if County had a mixed first and rezzies side out with a sprinkling of trialists and McGeouch joined the rapidly expanding treatment room with a groin injury. When Barclay is trotting on to play holding midfielder, you know there's a crisis. Adu-Adjei made his debut for the Blues and in a bright performance, could easily have had a hat-trick in the first 25 minutes; arguably scoring with the hardest of the three chances after read-





Another victory against Stockport in the sun—this time at Brunton Park









ing Wyke's knock down and hooking in. Wing-backs Harper and Davies had roamed forward well in a 5-3-2 formation, Harper in particular impressing with his dead ball deliveries. A fine move from a quick break gave the visitors a barely deserved equaliser early in the second half. Big Jon then drove against the post before Armstrong picked up the pieces from Barclay's half-cleared long throw.

United XI: Lewis, Thomas, Hayden, Mellish, Davies (Ellis 86), Harper, McGeouch (Barclay 17), Neal, Vela (Butterworth 76), Adu-Adjei (Armstrong 46), Wyke (Kelly 65).

Aug 6th (Tue)

Sean Maguire returns to the League O'Ireland, signing a multi-year contract with one his former sides, Cork City. Provided he's not being paid by the goal, he should be fine.

Aug 9th (Fri)

Two players not on the long journey with the team to Kent are **Harper**, who'll be out for 3-4 weeks and **Charters**, who will be back on Sony Playstation duties racking up his eSports caps for England during the next ten weeks/ten months (delete as applicable). Although not announced until the next day, the club register free agent left wing-back **Ben Williams** in time for the season opener. A Welsh international at Under-17, Under-19 and Under -21 level, the 25-year-old was released by Cheltenham Town at the end of last season after making 77 appearances since joining them from Barnsley for an undisclosed fee in January 2022.

Aug 10th (Sat)

ROTHERHAM YTH (2) 2 CUFC YTH (1) 2

Back to business for the youngsters and rewarded with a fine draw. A cross from the left wing was flicked on by Lambert and hammered in off the bar by Hopper for an early lead. Randall did well to deny a Millers forward from close range before the home team took the lead on the stroke of half-time, the second coming from the penalty spot. It was back to all square on the hour as a deep free-kick into the box from Murray was punched by the keeper, straight onto the head of Atkinson with the ball ricocheting into the goal. The Millers were reduced to 10 men with around 20 left on the clock, the Blues unable to carve out another clear chance for a winner as the home side sat back and defended well.

CUFC: Randall, Chapman, Hodgson, Porter, Nicholson, Atkinson, Murray, Lowes, Lambert, Skinner, Hopper.

GILLINGHAM (1) 4 CUFC (0) 1

50 seasons ago we were First Division new boys going to Stamford Bridge and beating upmarket Chelsea. The contrast could hardly be starker, the nappies-in-the-front-garden and sleeping bag in the doorway delights of Gillingham book-ended finishing the afternoon 92nd out of 92 after another defensive disaster. At least the Will Adams pre-match pub didn't disappoint, if only Lewis, Thomas and co. weren't serving up goals as fast as the two-man bar team were pulling pints. The worry in some ways is that we genuinely played quite well outside the goals, which does perhaps defeat rule 1 in football – score more goals than the opposition. What happens when we play badly? Would it have been 7-0? Although partly at fault for the third goal as he expectedly tired, **Ben Williams (below)** had an otherwise very good debut and set up Big Jon to bring it back to 2-1. Wyke and Adu-Adjei continued to lead the line well and created several chances; on another day United would have been 3-1 up at the break.

CUFC*: Lewis 4, Hayden 6, Thomas 5, **Mellish 7**, Barclay 5, Davies 6, B Williams 6, Neal 5, Vela 6, Wyke 5, Adu-Adjei 6. Subs: Butterworth 5, Ellis 6, Armstrong and Kelly n/a

*ratings from Jon Colman, News & Star.





Jon Mellish and Josh Vela working hard at Gillingham





Away Day Match Day Ticket Protocol



From the Match Day Organising Team

One of the key functions that the branch undertakes is the procurement of match tickets for its members for away fixtures. We work closely with the team in the ticket office at Carlisle United to do this for you.

It is a key responsibility for us to ensure that we submit a single ticket request to the ticket office, outlining clearly and concisely all of our ticket requirements, giving due consideration to the prioritisation of ticket orders by the ticket office, particularly where demand for tickets may be high and any deadlines the ticket office team ask us to meet.

Recently there have been a number of high-profile games, and there are more this season where we expect demand for tickets to exceed supply. Whilst we will try to acquire all of the tickets requested by members, on some occasions it may be necessary to prioritise ticket orders in the following order:

1. Members who are also CUFC season ticket holders.

2. Members, but strictly on the basis of one ticket per member, with the ticket being for the member's personal use.

3. Tickets required by members for friends/relatives who are not London Branch members.

There will be away fixtures in the 24/25 season where the demand for tickets from Branch members exceeds the number of tickets the branch is able to source. Should this happen, a ballot will be held on the basis of the above three categories.

Ticket Ordering

The match day ticket team will send an email (usually 12 days before an away fixture) detailing the categories and prices of tickets. There will be a deadline for responses.

Occasionally, for high-profile fixtures where demand is likely to be high, we may send an email three to four weeks prior to the fixture, requesting pre-orders. This will enable us to have our ticket requisition ready for submission when Carlisle United publish ticket details. Please Note: Other than for high-priority games, we will not ask for ticket orders until Carlisle United publish ticket details.

If you wish to order tickets, you must:

1. **Ensure you have sufficient funds in TDS to** cover the cost of your match tickets (and the cost of your rail ticket(s) if you are ordering your rail tickets through the Branch).

2. Reply to the email which will have been sent out by the match day ticket team (please don't send a separate email).

3. Make clear the number and category of tickets you require.

4. **Reply to the email by the deadline specified.** We will no longer be able to accommodate ticket requests submitted after the deadline.

Ticket Collection

Once Carlisle United have confirmed our ticket order, an email will be sent to members. The email will include details of the tickets ordered on their behalf, the meeting pub/distribution point, and the time window for collection.

Members are requested to leave plenty of time to ensure that they arrive at the meeting pub within the specified time window, ideally not leaving it until the last minute.

There will be occasions where members are delayed due to circumstances outside of their control and, in that event, please liaise with the match day ticket distributor at the earliest point possible.

If there are tickets that are not collected within the specified time period, where possible, these will be taken to a collection point at the ground.

Thank you. With your help, we look forward to make the ordering and collecting of tickets on your behalf a smooth process once again this season.

BRANCH CONTACTS 2024/25

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Chris Tembey	**Football Team Captain**	football@cusclb.com
Ruth & Pad Vamadevan	**Mascots Co-ordinators**	mascots@cusclb..com

We have regular social events in central London, often at the Civil Service Club, off Whitehall.

Virtual Hit the Bar! carries news of all forthcoming events.

Look out for details of matches, meeting places and other events in Virtual HTB! or visit www.https://www.carlislelondonbranch.org/



Thank you to all contributors to this edition of Hit the Bar!

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